

CLAIMS

1. Use of water to control particle size in a process for the production of particles for use in a pharmaceutical composition, said process comprising:
 - 5 mixing water with a component composition comprising at least a rheology modifying agent to produce a paste;
 - extruding at least a portion of the paste to form extrudate;
 - 10 spheronising at least a portion of the extrudate to form spheronised particles; and
 - drying at least a portion of the spheronised particles.
2. Use as claimed in Claim 1 wherein water is used in an amount of between from about 180 wt % to about 190 wt % of the component composition.
3. Use as claimed in Claim 1 or Claim 2 wherein water is used in an amount of about 185 wt % of the component composition.
4. Use as claimed in any of Claims 1 to 3 wherein between from about 80 % to about 98 % of particles have a diameter between the range of about 800 to about 1500 μm .
- 25 5. Use as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein between from about 95 % to about 98 % of particles have a diameter between the range of about 800 to about 1500 μm .
- 30 6. Use as claimed in Claim 3 wherein use of 5 wt % more water increases particle size such that substantially all of the particles have a diameter over 1500 μm .
- 35 7. Use as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein the dry particles are screened to obtain particles having a diameter with the range of about 800 to about 1500 μm .

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8. Use as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein the composition further comprises a therapeutically active compound selected from peptides, polypeptides, proteins, interferons, TNF antagonists, protein and peptide agonists and antagonists of the immune system, hormones, cytokines and cytokine agonists and antagonists, analgesics, antipyretics, antibacterial and antiprotozoal agents, anti-infective agents, antibiotics, antiviral agents, antifungal agents, antimalarial agents, anti-inflammatory agents, steroids, probiotics and prebiotics, opiate agonists and antagonists, bisphosphonates, anticancer and cytotoxic agents, immunomodulators, antiparasitic agents and pharmacologically acceptable salts and derivatives of each of these actives.

15 9. Use as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein the composition further comprises a therapeutically active compound selected from erythropoietin, human growth hormone, metronidazole, albenazole, mebendazole, praziquantel, clarithromycin, gentamycin, ciprofloxacin, rifabutin, 5-aminosalicylic acid, 4-aminosalicylic acid, balsalazide, prednisolone metasulphobenzoate, α -amylase, paracetamol, metformin, cyclophosphamide, cisplatin, vincristine, methotrexate, azathioprine and cyclosporin or pharmacologically acceptable salts or derivatives thereof.

20 10. Use as claimed in Claim 9 or Claim 10 wherein the therapeutically active compound is prednisolone or a pharmacologically acceptable salt or derivative thereof.

25 11. Use as claimed in Claim 9 or Claim 10 wherein the therapeutically active compound is metronidazole or a pharmacologically acceptable salt or derivative thereof.

30 12. Use as claimed in Claim 9 or Claim 10 wherein the therapeutically active compound is erythropoietin or a pharmacologically acceptable salt or derivative thereof.

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13. Use as claimed in any of Claims 8 to 12 wherein the therapeutically active compound is present in the composition in a therapeutic amount.

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14. Use as claimed in any of Claim 8 to 13 wherein the therapeutically active compound is present in an amount between from more than 0 wt % to about 90 wt% of the component composition.

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15. Use as claimed in any of Claim 8 to 14 wherein the therapeutically active compound is present in an amount between from more than 0 wt % to about 40 wt% of the component composition.

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16. Use as claimed in any of Claim 8 to 15 wherein the therapeutically active compound is present in an amount between from about 5 wt % to about 20 wt% of the component composition.

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17. Use as claimed in any of Claim 8 to 15 wherein the therapeutically active compound is present in an amount between from more than 0 wt % to about 1 wt % of the component composition.

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18. Use as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein the rheology modifying agent comprises croscarmellose sodium.

30 19. Use as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein the rheology modifying agent is Ac-Di-Sol™.

20. Use as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein the rheology modifying agent is present in an amount of at
35 least 5 wt % of the component composition.

21. Use as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein

the rheology modifying agent is present in an amount of at least 10 wt % of the component composition.

22. Use as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein
5 the rheology modifying agent is present in an amount of:
between from about 10 to about 40 wt % of the component
composition.

23. Use as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein
10 the rheology modifying agent is present in an amount of
about 20 wt % of the component composition.

24. Use as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein
the component composition further comprises sugar.

15 25. Use as claimed in Claim 24 wherein the sugar is lactose
monohydrate.

20 26. Use as claimed in Claim 24 or Claim 25 wherein the
sugar is present in an amount of between from about 30 to
about 50 wt % of the component composition.

25 27. Use as claimed in any of Claims 24 to 26 wherein the
sugar is present in an amount of about 35 wt % of the
component composition.

28. Use as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein
the component composition further comprises cellulose.

30 29. Use as claimed in Claim 28 wherein the cellulose is
microcrystalline cellulose.

35 30. Use as claimed in Claim 28 or Claim 29 wherein the
cellulose is present in an amount of between from about 35
to about 45 wt % of the component composition.

31. Use as claimed in any of Claims 28 to 30 wherein the

cellulose is present in an amount of about 30 wt % of the component composition.

32. Use as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein
5 the composition consists essentially of prednisolone or a pharmacologically acceptable salt or derivative thereof, a rheology modifying agent, sugar and cellulose.

33. Use as claimed in any of Claims 1 to 31 wherein the
10 composition consists essentially of metronidazole or a pharmacologically acceptable salt or derivative thereof, a rheology modifying agent, sugar and cellulose.

34. Use as claimed in any of Claims 1 to 31 wherein the
15 composition consists essentially of erythropoetin or a pharmacologically acceptable salt or derivative thereof, a rheology modifying agent, sugar and cellulose.

35. Use substantially as hereinbefore described with
20 reference to the accompanying examples.

36. A process for the production of particles for use in a pharmaceutical composition, said process comprising the steps of:

25 mixing water with a component composition comprising at least a rheology modifying agent to produce a paste;
extruding at least a portion of the paste to form extrudate;
spheronising at least a portion of the extrudate to
30 form spheronised particles; and
drying at least a portion of the spheronised particles.

37. A process as claimed in Claim 36 wherein the amount of water used is between from about 180 to about 190 wt % of
35 the weight of the component composition and, where the spheronising step uses a rotation 70 cm plate, the plate does not rotate at about 33 rpm.

38. A process as claimed in Claim 36 or Claim 37 wherein
the process comprises any of the features defined in Claims
2 to 35.

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39. A process substantially as hereinbefore described with
reference to the accompanying examples.

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